AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-16 (Canceled)

17. (New) A composition based on zirconium oxide comprising cerium oxide in an atomic ratio Zr/Ce > 1, and in addition comprising lanthanum oxide and an oxide of a rare earth other than cerium and lanthanum, wherein after calcination for 6 hours at 1150°C it has a specific surface of at least 10 m^2/g.

18. (New) (New) The composition as claimed in claim 17, wherein after calcination for 6 hours at 1150°C it has a specific surface of at least 15 m^2/g.

19. (New) The composition as claimed in claim 17, wherein after calcination for 6 hours at 1200°C it has a specific surface of at least 3 m^2/g.

20. (New) The composition as claimed in claim 17, wherein after calcination for 6 hours at 900°C it has a specific surface of at least 50 m^2/g.

21. (New) The composition as claimed in claim 17, wherein after calcination for 6 hours at 1000°C it has a specific surface of at least 40 m^2/g.

22. (New) The composition as claimed in claim 17, wherein the rare earth is neodymium.

23. (New) The composition as claimed in claim 17, wherein the contents by weight of oxides are at least 50% for zirconium, less than 50% for the oxide of cerium, 5% at most for lanthanum and 15% at most for the rare earth.

24. (New) The composition as claimed in claim 17, being sulfur-free.

25. A method of preparation of a composition as claimed in claim 17, comprising the steps of:

a) preparing a mixture comprising compounds of cerium, of lanthanum and of the aforementioned rare earth and a sol of a zirconium compound;

b) adding to the mixture of step a) a solution of a basic compound whereby a precipitate is obtained;

c) heating said precipitate in an aqueous medium; and

d) calcining the precipitate thus obtained in step c).

26. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein the sol of a zirconium compound of step a) is obtained by heat treatment of an aqueous solution of a zirconium oxychloride.

27. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein the sol of a zirconium compound of step a) is obtained by the action of nitric acid on a hydroxide or carbonate of zirconium in a molar ratio NO_3^-/Zr between 1.7 and 2.3 in the case of a hydroxide and 1.7 and 2 in the case of a carbonate.

28. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein in step c) the

precipitate is heated at a temperature of at least 100°C.

29. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein in step c) the heating of the precipitate is carried out at basic pH.

30. (New) A catalytic system, comprising a composition as defined in claim 17.

32. (New) A method of treatment of the exhaust gases of internal combustion engines, comprising the step of treating said gases with a catalytic system as claimed in claim 30 or a composition as claimed in claim 17.